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SUBJECT: NSC JUNE 1 REVIEWS ONGOING OPERATIONS, AMNESTY
IMPLEMENTAION, ICI READOUT

REF: BAGHDAD

Classified By: CDA Patricia A. Butenis for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S REL MCFI) Summary: Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki chaired June 1 the National Security Council (NSC) that reviewed security operations in Basra, Sadr City, and Mosul. (Note: Deputy PM Barham Salih, National Security Advisor Mowaffak Rubaie, and Minister of State for National Security Shirwan Wa'eli were absent. End note.) The council discussed reconstruction, clean up, and job creation in the three areas of recent security operations. Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari gave a short, upbeat readout of the May 29 International Compact for Iraq (ICI) meeting in Stockholm. The council also reviewed implementation of the amnesty program, noting that releases of detainees were lagging behind grants of amnesty. End Summary.

Upbeat Mood

¶2. (S REL MCFI) Before the formal session began, PM Maliki engaged in some light, friendly banter with MNF-I Commanding General David Petraeus about the General's recent trip to Washington. General Petraeus noted that he had had a good trip, observing that progress in Iraq tends to make visits to the United States go well. In response to the General's comment that violence was down to levels not seen since 2004, the PM smiled and declared that the goal was 2003 levels, evoking good-hearted agreement around the table.

PM highlights security complexity

¶3. (S REL MCFI) The PM gave his assessment of the current security situation, noting that like a newborn baby, the situation cannot be neglected. He noted that there are indications that the insurgents are not happy with our success and will try to strike back. The PM said that what was needed was an assessment of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and the militias and what preparations they were making. He asserted that better intelligence efforts were essential and assessed that in Basra, despite initial challenges, the intelligence cell has done good work and the intelligence cell in Mosul has done even better. Minister of Defense (MOD) Abdul Qadr interjected that he would be meeting the next day with MNF-I and GOI agencies to discuss the use of intelligence to develop leads to close the noose on AQI. After acknowledging the MOD's planned next step, Maliki underlined again the importance of coordinating security measures and characterized Iraq's borders as open gates for harm to enter his country from east and west. He stressed the need to control the borders to forestall foreign terrorists from returning to Iraq after they have fled, re-grouped and re-armed. The Directorate of Border Enforcement (DBE) is part of the security system, but it is not fulfilling its role.

¶4. (S REL MCFI) Minister of Interior (MOI) Jawad al-Bolani agreed that the DBE was not fulfilling its role in the security system, pointing out that poor, isolated conditions presented challenges for DBE personnel. He called on the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to release 600 billion Iraqi Dinar (approximately 600 million dollars) to allow MOI to upgrade facilities and properly train and equip personnel. He listed border priorities as Syria followed by Iran. He noted that local tribes in Anbar had supported Iraqi forces in interdicting malign actors coming across the border.

Responding to the MOD, he agreed that rotating DBE staff every six months made sense, but this will increase the cost of training.

¶5. (S REL MCFI) The PM instructed the MOI to develop a plan to deal with security in the Amara area. (Note: Amara is in Maysan province on the border with Iran and has seen an influx of fighters fleeing Basra and Sadr City. End Note.) The PM noted this area was a gap and that drugs and other contraband freely crossed the border there. He counseled the MOI to show success in his efforts if he wishes to receive supplemental funding. MOI responded that he needs supplemental funding for capital projects in order to successfully combat illegal activity at the borders. After further discussion, the PM asked the council for a show of hands to support his instruction to the MOF that it release 300 billion Iraqi Dinar to the MOI.

Mosul/Ninewa operations

¶6. (S REL MCFI) The MOD characterized the ongoing security

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operations in Mosul as very effective, bringing AQI to semi-collapse. He highlighted next steps to search house-to-house in areas not yet cleared and successes in detaining many AQI commanders, including some who had fled Mosul for Baiji. He underlined the need for more forces to successfully prosecute the next phase of deliberate, house-to-house clearing, noting that he would shift a brigade to Mosul soon.

¶7. (S REL MCFI) The PM called for a detailed assessment of the strategy being pursued and enhanced use of intelligence to gather information. MOI concurred, saying the operation in Mosul was 65 percent complete and calling for a better focus of the intelligence collection on remaining targets. PM emphasized the importance of controlling access to Mosul and to Ninewa, to tighten the noose on the remaining AQI elements. MOD noted that after its success in Lebanon, Syrian-supported fighters may be coming to Ninewa. Iraqi Joint Forces Commander General Babarkir Shawkt stated that a new brigade will arrive July 20 to supplement operations in Mosul. He reported he had visited Mosul and assessed that about 40 percent of the city was secured. He added that the military had already recovered tons of explosives and that the reaction of the population towards the Iraqi Security Forces was positive. Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari stressed the importance of money being spent for humanitarian and development projects now - delays would undermine the positive reaction of the people to the GOI.

¶8. (S REL MCFI) PM Maliki called for all necessary steps to re-establish normalcy. In response, the MOI said that 20,000 locals had been hired already on clean-up and construction projects. General Petraeus stated that MOD, MOI, and the MOF were doing great but that the GOI coordinators on the ground had not delivered; to date, the three hundred million dollars of emergency assistance allocations of the GOI (100 million dollars each for Basra, Sadr City, and Mosul), had not been used. The MOF protested that he had released the funds. (Note: Embassy staff discovered the next day that this was mostly true, but that failure to execute required paperwork had delayed the release of funds for Sadr City. Embassy personnel intervened with GOI counterparts to have Sadr City

funds released without further delay. End note.) General Petraeus acknowledged that the problem was not with the MOF, laying the blame for failure to use the provided funding on the shoulders of the three special coordinators: Safa al-Safi for Basra; Hak al-Hakim for Sadr City; and Zuhair Chalabi for Mosul. General Petraeus suggested the GOI press the three special coordinators for reports on their efforts to date and not lose the support of Iraqi citizens due to delays and failures to provide needed funding for job-creating repair and reconstruction projects. PM instructed the MOF, MOI, and MOD to follow-up on the matter.

AQI Violence in Anbar

¶9. (S REL MCFI) In a brief aside, the PM noted recent violence in Anbar, blaming the disputes between different factions for creating an opportunity for AQI. General Petraeus noted that this spike in violence underscored the need to increase the authorized number of Iraqi Police (IP) in the province, especially in light of the deployment of three brigades of the Iraqi Army (IA) from Anbar Province to Basra and Sadr City. The IJFC concurred with this assessment, noting that of the two divisions based in Anbar, only one was there.

Sadr City Operations Progress

¶10. (S REL MCFI) Baghdad Operations Commander General Abud Qambar presented an overview of ongoing operation in Sadr City, detailing the success the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) had had and were continuing to have. He noted that forces were patrolling all of Sadr City and would soon establish Joint Security Stations (JSS) at four current police stations in Sadr City. This will allow the ISF to intensify its patrols and conduct raids as well. Abud lamented the lack of judicial personnel to issue warrants for those already identified as criminals or terrorists. In response to PM Maliki's questions, he stated that MNF-I was not conducting operations in Sadr City with the ISF, noting that the ISF alone was engaged in clearing operations. The PM pressed him, saying that with MNF help, the ISF could speed up clearing operations, but Abud insisted that the ISF could do the job. (Comment: Abud is carefully planning operations in Sadr City and will resist being stampeded into precipitous action. He also likely prefers an outwardly Iraqi-only presence to deny militia fighters a pretext (resisting

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foreign forces) for fighting. End Comment.)

¶11. (S REL MCFI) He and the MOD praised the support of the intelligence service (INIS) in capturing militia fighters, in particular the capture several trying to flee through the Baghdad airport to Iran. General Petraeus characterized the airport capture as very important and noted that MOI had captured 11 militia fighters trying to flee to Iran from Maysan province, and mentioned that one carried a European passport. (Comment: This discussion underlined the importance of MOI's DBE getting effective control of the borders to capture fleeing fighters and prevent entry or re-entry of others. End comment.)

¶11. (S REL MCFI) General Abud sparked a heated exchange with the MOI when he spoke derisively of the IP and the Facilities Protection Service (FPS). He called upon the PM to dismiss all the IP and FPS in Sadr City. MOI defended the IP, saying they were close to the people. (Comment: MOI did not try to defend the FPS. End comment.) Abud stated categorically that all the IP of Sadr City are corrupted, allied to the Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM), and totally unreliable. Worse, they had turned their weapons and vehicles over to JAM fighters, not merely fled their posts when the ISF went into Sadr City. The MOI insisted that not all of them were bad. Abud reiterated his assessment that all the IP of Sadr City had to

be dismissed and new ones from elsewhere in Baghdad brought in until new IP for Sadr city could be recruited and trained.

The PM at first wavered, suggesting many Sadr City IP could be retained after vetting, but by the end of the discussion, he said that for the time being the IP in Sadr City must be outsiders to prevent the situation from going backward.

¶12. (S REL MCFI) Trying to recover somewhat, the MOI asked how the police stations would be used by the IA. Abud said the police stations would become JSSs and serve as a base for patrols and raids. He noted that ss JSSs, the police stations could not be easily overwhelmed. The IJFC said that the police stations to be converted to JSS would be returned to police control, eventually. Abud noted that the ISF was coordinating with other GOI ministries to provide food and medical assistance.

ICI Readout

¶13. (S REL MCFI) Foreign Minister Zebari gave a brief readout of the ICI meeting held in Stockholm May 29. He noted the success of the PM's interventions and his positive meetings with Secretary Rice, UNSG Ban, and many others. Zebari stated that the greatest result was the show of support for Iraq from so many nations present - Iraq showed that it was not a failed or failing state and deserves to be counted as a full member of the international community. The delegation, led by the PM, had shown that reforms were on track and the joint efforts of Iraqis with their partners in the ICI were succeeding. He declared that the next meeting of the ICI should take place in Iraq, possibly Baghdad, in about one year. The PM ratified Zebari's comments, calling the meeting a real success in its presentation of a positive image of Iraq - this must continue, he added.

Amnesty Program Implementation

¶14. (S REL MCFI) The Prosecutor General detailed the progress to date in identifying those eligible for amnesty, those released, those pending designation of a guarantor, and those for whom there was a warrant but who had not been arrested. Later, when questioned by MNF-I DCG LTG Cooper (UK) regarding releases versus grants of amnesty, the Prosecutor General admitted that releases from custody were lagging behind the grants of amnesty. Separately, he called on the Baghdad Operations Commanders to ensure that all evidence for legal cases against those detained is preserved and presented to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and its appropriate staff. The PM noted that MOI and MOJ must work together. MOI lamented that many of his personnel were not trained to collect evidence. MOI also emphasized the need to send magistrates to Mosul to show people there that the GOI was implementing justice.

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